

[3 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

through Work Plans. As per the Work Plan an Outlay of Rs. 54.14 crore have been earmarked for horticulture development in Maharashtra during 2000-01 and 2001-02.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) In all, an amount of Rs. 89.35 crores was released to the Government of Maharashtra during the year 2000-01 and an amount of Rs. 45.00 crores has been released towards the first instalment during 2001-02 under the Macro-Management Scheme.

Private investment in agriculture

1381. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while inaugurating the Chief Minister's Conference on impact of WTO regime on agriculture and the procurement policy, in May, the Prime Minister expressed concern over the falling investment in agriculture and stressed the need for encouraging private investment; and

(b) if so, what strategy, if any, was evolved to encourage private investment in agriculture and how it would affect the land ownership system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Prime Minister expressed concern over falling public investment in Agriculture. He pointed out that "both the Centre and the State should use the available limited resources more efficiently, especially for capital formation. We must devise attractive policies to encourage private investment in agriculture especially in extension services."

Under the National Agriculture Policy, Government intend to encourage private sector investment in agriculture more particularly in areas like agricultural research, human resource development, post harvest management and marketing. A conducive climate will be created through a favourable price and trade regime to promote farmers' own investments as also investments by industries producing inputs for agriculture and agro based industries.

Setting up of agro-processing units in the producing areas to reduce wastage, especially of horticultural produce, increased value addition and creation of off-farm employment in rural areas will be encouraged with a view to ensuring a better return to the grower. Collaboration between the producer cooperatives and the corporate sector will be encouraged to promote agro-processing industry. The Small Farmers Agro Business Consortium (SFAC) will be energized to cater to the needs of farmer entrepreneurs and promote public and private investments in agri-business.

The approach to land reforms will focus on area like redistribution of surplus and waste lands among the landless, updating and improvement of land records, development of lease markets and recognition of women's right in land.

Private sector participation will be promoted through contract farming and land leasing arrangements to allow accelerated technology transfer, capital inflow and assured markets for crop production, especially of oilseeds, cotton and horticultural crops.

Central schemes for agricultural production in Bihar

†1382. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes and programmes being implemented by the Central Government to increase agricultural production in Bihar, during the last three years; and

(b) the financial assistance provided to Bihar by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) The details of Central Sector/Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for development of agriculture in Bihar during the last three years are given in the Statement. (*See below*).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.